

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 24, 34, 41 and 44 to read as shown below. A copy of the Marked-up Claims is attached for the Examiner's convenience.

24. (Twice Amended) A voice-based auction system for use over a communication network comprising:

C1 an auctioneer voice transmitter for entering auctioneer voice messages from an auctioneer;

a plurality of bidder voice terminals each for entering voice bidder messages from a bidder respective thereto, each of said bidder voice terminals also for presenting voice bidder messages from other bidders and said auctioneer voice messages;

a connecting means interconnecting said transmitter and said terminals;

a processing means attached to said connecting means for converting said voice bidder messages into bidder data signals, each of said bidder data signals containing a bidder identifier and bid information; and,

an output means connected to said processing means for presenting said bidder data signals to said auctioneer.

34. (Twice Amended) A voice-based auction system for use over a communication network comprising:

C2 an auctioneer voice transmitter for entering auctioneer voice messages from an auctioneer;

a plurality of bidder voice terminals each for entering voice bidder messages from a bidder respective thereto, each of said bidder voice terminals also for presenting voice bidder messages from other bidders and said auctioneer voice messages;

a connecting means interconnecting said transmitter and said terminals;

a processing means attached to said connecting means for converting said voice bidder messages into a bidder data signal, each of said bidder data signals containing a bidder identifier and bid information and said processing means including a message selector for determining whether said voice bidder messages are active bidder messages or inactive bidder messages;

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a time compensation means attached to said connecting means for determining propagation delays of signals within said network and utilizing said propagation delays for ordering said active bidder messages according to a real-time order in which said bidder messages were entered; and,

an output means connected to said processing means and said time compensation means for presenting, in order, said active bidder data signals to said auctioneer.

cont
41. (Twice Amended) A voice processing means for use in an auction system for use over a communication network, said auction system having an auctioneer voice transmitter for entering auctioneer voice messages from an auctioneer; a plurality of bidder voice terminals each for entering voice bidder messages from a bidder respective thereto, each of said bidder voice terminals also for presenting voice bidder messages from other bidders and said auctioneer voice messages; a connecting means interconnecting said transmitter and said terminals, said processing means comprising:

recognizing means for converting said and voice bidder messages into a bidder data signal, each of said bidder data signals containing a bidder identifier and bid information and; and,

a message selector for determining whether said voice bidder messages are active bidder messages or inactive bidder messages such that only said active bidder messages are converted into bidder data signals to be presented at an output means.

44. (Twice Amended) A method of conducting a voice-based auction over a network comprising the steps of:

receiving, from an auctioneer, an auctioneer voice message at an auctioneer voice terminal connected to said network;

CH presenting said auctioneer voice message at a plurality of bidder voice terminal connected to said network;

receiving a voice bidder message from a bidder, said bidder voice message being responsive to said auctioneer voice message, said voice bidder message received at one of said bidder voice terminals respective to said bidder;

presenting said received voice bidder message at a remainder of said bidder voice terminals;

converting said voice bidder message into a bidder data signal, each of said bidder data signals containing a bidder identifier and bid information;

presenting said bidder data signal to said auctioneer at an output means; and,

repeating the foregoing steps until said auctioneer closes bidding.